

ADVENTURE PROBE



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HALL OF FAME

My sincere thanks to the following readers who were kind enough to send in contributions during the past month. Without people like these there would be no Probe and I really appreciate all your help.

Dorothy Millard, Jim Donaldson, Nic Rumsey, Emma Heggie, Larry Horsfield, The Wayfarer, Lorna Paterson, The Innkeeper, Phil Darke, Simon Maren, The Gruel, Paul Cardin, E Fry, Allan Phillips, John Packham, Tony Bridge, Alf Baldwin, Mark Walker, Stuart Whyte, Gordon Inglis, Pam Pramail, Clive Swain, Jim Struthers, Paul Brunyee, Paul Avis, Sandra Sharkey, Doreen Bardon, Neil Shipman, John Barnsley, Debby Howard, Tom Frost and June Rowe.

This months cover picture is by Allan Batchellor.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Probe contributions file is getting a little thin so I would be very grateful if you would send in some contributions soon. I would be very pleased to receive anything you might like to send but am especially short of Reviews, Bugs and Amusing Responses, Getting You Started, Fishing for Red Herrings, Precision Corner, contributions for the Golden Oldies section and Articles. Please remember that Probe depends on you to keep going.



EDITORIAL



Welcome to Volume III Issue 10 of Adventure Probe.

You know what they say about the best laid plans... Well here I am, surrounded by boxes and packing crates trying to write my Editorial with my feet resting on a rolled up carpet! Yes, I'm still here in Maes y Cwm. I was hoping to write this at the new house but because the builders have some last minute jobs to finish we still haven't got the key, don't know the moving date and still have a post number instead of the new address! Of course we know now that we will be moving either this week or next but as I have to get Probe typed up well before the publication date it has made things a little awkward to say the least. I will let you know the new address as soon as I possibly can, hopefully there will be a little slip enclosed with each Probe, but at present I will have to leave the old address in Probe. I joked with some of you over the telephone this month saying that my face would be very red if I had to type the same sort of Editorial as last month, i.e. "We are moving but don't know where or when!" So here I am with cheeks aglow doing just that. Talk about frustration!

Some little beaver discovered that it was my birthday in September and another little beaver worked out how old I would be too. Then they got together and began to spread the word amongst the readers to surprise me. They certainly did! What a wonderful day it was. I have never received so many cards in my life! Thank you all so very much for making my F... F.... Ph..... (choke! splutter!) thirtyninth plus VAT birthday so lovely. And when so many of you followed up your cards with a telephone call on the day, I was over the moon! Just to hear The Innkeeper singing "Happy Birthday to Yooooou!" was a treat in itself. As for Lorna and Joan who started the whole campaign, in reply to your timid question of "Has anyone ever been thrown out of Probe?" the answer is I would never dream of doing such a thing, especially to such lovely people.

Many thanks to all who took the time to let me have the new address of Activision UK Ltd, it is Blake House, Manor Farm Road, Reading, Berks, RG2 0JN. Telephone 0734 311666. Now I am going to ask you all to inundate them with calls and letters demanding that they ask Infocom to release their adventures for your micro's. An underground tip informs me that it should just do the trick. I cannot say anything yet but I hope that very soon now there will be some great news for Atari ST owners. Watch this space.

Our last campaign in Probe to reinstate the Adventure Column in Amstrad Action proves that if sufficient numbers of adventurers do write and complain about something then something is done. I hope to bring you confirmation of success in yet another campaign in the next issue but meanwhile Dr Sparks informs me that CRASH seem to have dropped their adventure column too since their revamp in June. So I ask you all to put pen to paper once again to see if we can do something about it.

I hear there are strange stirrings and murmurings coming from the direction of ACL! It looks as if Henry is back. I will bring you more news as it comes. Meanwhile I had better leave you all to get on with reading this issue in peace while I go and try to catch up with answering some of your letters. Things may go a little quiet at my end during the next couple of weeks but don't worry, I'll see you all again next month as usual.

Mandy
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SOFTWARE REVIEWS



SHERLOCK HOLMES - THE CASE OF THE BEHEADED SMUGGLER

Available for Spectrum 48/128K - Price £2.99

From MENTAL IMAGE, 36 Varney Rd, Langley, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 8NX

Reviewer SUE ROSEBLADE

This is a two part text adventure written by Patrick Walsh, which includes an excellent introduction, and another game called TUPPIE on the reverse of the tape.

The adventure begins, as many of the Conan Doyle stories do, with Holmes and Watson receiving a visit. This time it is from a young man expressing deep concern for the safety of his uncle, George Mathay, who has become involved in a dangerous smuggling business. Arriving at his country address, you are confronted with a hideous murder. As Sherlock Holmes, the world's greatest detective, you must discover the murder weapon, the motive and finally, the killer.

In part One, you explore the house and grounds, seeking evidence and clues. It is possible to complete this part with less than a full score. You then return to London for Part Two, and follow up the information obtained in the first part. You do not need to load a saved position or to use a password to start Part Two, but you won't get far without some of the vital information from part one, (write things down!)

What is immediately striking about this adventure is the style and atmosphere created in the location descriptions and messages. The author seems to have a good knowledge of the Sherlock Holmes stories and his ability to produce a well written adventure is indisputable. The parser is most friendly, and all the usual helpful facilities are provided, which leads me (as Sherlock Holmes!) to deduce that it was written using PAW.

This is a well constructed game and as Patrick Walsh's first adventure it does him credit. I did notice quite a few spelling mistakes and typing errors, not easy to avoid when using such lengthy descriptive passages, and from time to time the grammar was a little suspect. As these sort of things tend to annoy more picky old adventurers like me, I would suggest that more thorough playtesting would be in order. This would avoid the feeling that the game gives of being slightly unpolished and in a hurry to get out into the world!

I found only one minor bug worth mentioning. If you climb into the attic and then light your lamp, the attic remains dark. It is necessary to light the lamp before climbing up. The scoring also seems to be a bit erratic. I managed to score 122% in Part Two, and I know I'm not that clever, even if I am the world's greatest detective!

To sum up: Atmosphere and plot, excellent; Puzzles and vocabulary, good; Playtesters, please! I enjoyed playing it, and look forward to future adventures from Patrick.

TUPPIE

A second adventure comes on this tape from Mental Image. It's very different in style and content from the Sherlock Holmes game, but likewise shows the Author's capabilities. It is a much smaller and simpler adventure, which can be completed in an evening, but it is lighthearted and amusing.

Nigel Ffoulkes-Saythe is a typical Yuppia. By carrying out typical Yuppie deeds he should be able to amass enough points to receive the Order of the Golden Filofax. If he can acquire enough cash, he will also be able to purchase a brand new red Porcha. Hooray!!

ZORK ZERO
THE REVENGE OF MAGABOZ
By INFOCOM. Reviewer - THE GRUE! played on Amiga.

The Zork name has become one of the legends of computer adventuring, after all, over one million players have now bought the game. Now Steve Mereteky takes you back to its very roots, a time when the Great Underground Empire was at its peak. The Royal family of Fletheade have ruled under the constant threat that one day Magaboz will cast a curse that will destroy the Empire and the present dynasty of Fletheade. Luckily you are present when Magaboz decides to fulfill his threat. If you can halt the curse then a huge reward can be yours, half the wealth of the Kingdom to be precise!

To lift the curse you must find two items that have belonged to each of the twelve Fletheade but be careful what you do with them as they have a part to play in solving some of the puzzles. One of the things that Zork Zero will love about this game is the chance to visit the places you'd only previously heard about such as the Great Underground Highway and the legendary Grenade Mine. You'll also meet, mostly when you don't want to, the Court Jester. This unpredictable character can be a real pain in the butt, he is also very helpful though. He will often challenge you to solve a rhyme or riddle or occasionally just for fun turn you into some sort of animal or teleport you to another area of the Empire. Although this is really a text adventure with graphics, the graphics have been used to great effect and do much to enhance the gameplay. Most adventures use the graphics to pretty the scenes up but not so with Zork Zero. They are an integral part of the game, what they have come up with are graphic interpretations of famous games played throughout the Empire. Games like the brilliant Double Fenucci, Peggieboz and the difficult Snarfee. Playing Double Fenucci was all I expected of it to be, the most stupid and silly card game I'd ever played but I did have fun playing it.

The descriptions in the game are up to Infocom's high standard and Mereteky has given us a real treat with his genuine originality of puzzles not to mention the wit and humour. It is also excruciatingly difficult at times and it's easy to overlook the simple things like the tie in the neck (?) The on-screen mapping is most useful and you can use it for moving around the Kingdom. This is far quicker than actually travelling through each room at a time. They have even used this mapping feature to produce a puzzle here and there, quite brilliant. I still dislike the on-screen hints, I feel that many people will be tempted to use them because the game can be quite difficult at times. This is a real pity because in my opinion, if used, the hint option will spoil a stunning game. I find it hard to criticize Infocom although at times they deserve it, but Zork Zero is almost faultless. This is Infocom's largest game to date containing more puzzles than the original trilogy put together. The packaging contains a scrap of parchment containing a spell from the notebook of the great magician Magaboz, a construction blueprint and a calendar featuring trivia about the twelve Fletheade. The calendar in particular is great fun to read and forces the solving of the game's puzzles. You won't be able to complete the game without it. To sum up, Zork Zero is full of puzzles, riddles and wonderful descriptive text. It has humour and wit that no other company can match and is extremely detailed. It also answers one of the great mysteries, the origin of the White Housers - one of their best.





THE GORDELLO INCIDENT

TARTAN SOFTWARE, 61 Beillie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus, DD10 9DT
Available for Spectrum 48/128K price £3.95
Reviewer - JUNE ROWE

The Terten Terror has done it again! Tom Frost has designed a game which is even more devious and mind-bending than DOUBLE AGENT. This new game is definitely only for those adventurers who like a challenge worse than the "Stinker" crossword in Weekend, or the "Mephisto" puzzle that appears in one of those up-market Sunday newspapers.

The story is, briefly, that you are a special agent and Dr. Gordello has provided a video film of two clones who look exactly like you. He is threatening to make clones of eminent people in world-wide industry and politics, with a view to taking over the world.

Having ascertained that you are really YOU and not a clone, your boss tells you that, using a computer, you can control these two clones. Your job is to turn them into one super clone and force him to destroy the CLDNETRON and eliminate Dr. Gordello.

You are told that the two clones, known as AB and BA, are sub-standard - you have to get to a situation where you have created AA, the super clone.

AB will respond to your commands, but BA (being somewhat deficient in the electronic brain area) does just the opposite of what he is told. It is quite amusing, having to remember that if you want him to wear a jacket, you must tell him to remove it, and so on.

Part 1 is not too difficult, compared to the other parts, which get progressively harder. Even this, though, is complicated by the appearance of other characters, who may or may not have objects which you need to steal. These characters appear at any time. To make things worse for you, the clone you are controlling may suddenly decide to move to another location. When your clone steals an object, he will definitely move, possibly to an area where he will be discovered by the guards and carried off, which is the end of the game. Frequent use of the P for PAUSE button will help matters - it gives you time to make a note or have a little think about what to do next.

There is also a "back one move" command, which is Muliigen or M for short. This is extremely useful if the game has been inadvertently ended by one of the clones running into the guards.

You can play part 2 without having completed the first part, but it won't do you any good, because you need a codeword and other information to feed into the computer in part 2. This needs much more brain power to solve.

Why? Because the two clones bumped heads when leaving the ante-room in part 1, slightly disturbing the electronic circuitry of their "brain". This has the effect of making them move one after the other, with BA, as before, moving in the opposite direction.

You will discover quite soon that there are four areas with TV cameras and a Surveillance Monitor Room, where the guards are watching. They don't like clones wandering around and will quickly rush out to carry you off if you hang around too long. The puzzle is to get one of the clones to the computer room with the necessary disc. He then has to

feed in the information which will (a) lower the drawbridge and (b) switch on the lights in the Entrance Hall, which is on the other side of the moat. Doing this without manoeuvring the other clone into one of the monitored areas, is not at all easy! Nor is it easy to complete the rest of the part and acquire the password which you will need to get into Part 3!

When you get into Part 3 (or should I say iF?) you will see that you have created the super clones and now control AA. In this part it is possible for you to control some of the fourteen characters who wander around. A few of these may help you, if they have the necessary attributes.

The characters are extremely varied - they include a strong man, a clown, a fisherman, a gardener and a locksmith, amongst others. When you CALL (character) to enable you to control him, he could be anywhere, so the first thing to do is to map the fifteen available locations outside the clinic. Then you can direct the character to where you want him.

When you are told that AA isn't strong enough to open a door, you can call the strong man to open it, enter a small storm room and bring out the box which is there. He can't open it, though, so you might call a locksmith. He can't open it either - he doesn't have the special knowledge required, so think again!

As always in Tom Frost's game, there will be pointers to the answers, but can you spot them?

To play part 4, you will again need a password. The problems will keep the clever adventure puzzling for hours, days, months maybe, and I am sure that even the most persimilous buyer could not truthfully say that he didn't get more than his money's worth from this game.

Buy it.....and go happily mad trying to solve it!

RETARDED CREATURES AND CAVERNS



Available for Spectrum 48/128K price £2.49.
From ZENOBI SOFTWARE, 26 Spotland Tpce, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs, OL12 7NX

Reviewer - SUE ROSEBLADE

This is the latest adventure from Zenoobi, now famous for receiving the ACL Award for Mail Order Software Company Of The Year. On the reverse side of the tape is another adventure written by one Palmer P Eldritch entitled "A Legacy For Alaric." Is that his real name? (Palmer, not Alaric!). More about that side later, back to R.C & C.

First of all, I have to admit that this is the first of John Wilson's games that I've played. This may be a good thing, or it may not, but at least you'll get a fresh point of view, as I didn't have any idea of what to expect.

As a result of replying to an advert in the Goblin Gazzette, Bulbo receives a jiffy bag containing a map, a pouch and a sheet of instructions. With it comes a note which reads "Please make your way to Caetis Toldi on the 25th of the month and don't be late." Owing to

s previous engagement Bulbo is unable to attend, so he passes the message on to Algernon who lives next door. Armed with the contents of the jiffy bag, some clothes and Bulbo's precious boots, Algy sets off towards the castle.

The object of the adventure seems to be to return with as much gold as you can carry. The gold is not difficult to find, but it does have a very large dragon sitting on top of it! Whatever you do, look after those boots!

This adventure is quite different from most in that it contains very few locations. However, I've rarely seen one with so much to do in one single place. I spent a couple of hours in the first two locations without running out of things to do! It's possible to examine almost everything imaginable, and in response to this you are presented with long messages containing even more things to examine. Many of these turn out to be irrelevant, but are highly entertaining nonetheless.

It would have helped if I'd realised earlier that typing the word WORN describes what Algy is wearing at the time. Having eventually discovered this, I was still hopelessly stuck in the second location. After trying all the possibilities I could think of I wrote to Zenobi for help, and this was received by return of post. (Full marks there!) It seems that I had the right idea, but was using the wrong wording. I found that this problem occurred a couple more times later in the game. A bit annoying, but having said that, this was positively the only thing that I didn't enjoy in the game, and that was probably just as much my fault as Algy's!

I liked the style of the game and played parts of it over again, just to see what happened if a different alternative was selected. I shall be trying some of the earlier offerings from Zenobi as soon as I can get around to it. I should imagine regular followers of "The Beetrog" will love R.C & C. If like me, his games are new to you, then why not give it a try, or you'll never know what you're missing.

A LEGACY FOR ALARIC - PART ONE

Alaric, the Great Wizard's nephew, is being held prisoner in the dungeon of a castle which stands on a mist-shrouded island in the middle of a frozen lake. As a new recruit to the Adventurer's Guild (not to be confused with the Adventurer's Club, R.I.P.) your quest is to find and rescue him, so that he can inherit the fortune left to him by his uncle.

This is a well written, engaging and average sort of adventure. Most adventurers will find it quite easy, but as a "B" side to the tape I thought it was fairly good value. The game was written using PAM and therefore uses IT, ALL and RAMSAVE facilities. I did find a few minor bugs, but these do not interfere with your progress.

One final mystery. I completed Part One with a score of 130/150, but where is Part Two? I hope Zenobi are releasing it soon, as I can't hang on to my final SAVE'd position indefinitely while Palmer writes the rest of the adventure! By the way, if anyone can tell me how to score those last 20 points, I'd be most grateful.



A.R.C. Alien Research Centre - Zenobi Software - £2.99 inc.
Reviewer - Paul Brunyee - Played on a 48k Spectrum.

Digitized screams in a text adventure! Audible explosions, and within the B-side adventure 'Hit', the thud-thud-thud of machine guns hitting their mark! This was something new for a 48k Spectrum adventure - new for me anyway, and provided a further, interesting angle to these two text and graphics adventures.

The alien research centre is a vast apace-bound ship, populated with scientists investigating life forms around the universe. Live species inhabit the A.R.C in specially constructed areas but a disturbing transmission informs the A.R.C controllers about a crew member becoming intoxicated on an hallucinogenic drug and releasing some of the predator class beings held in captivity. These creatures have turned on their captors such that the A.R.C. is now out of control. One of the A.R.C. controllers invites you to his office;

Brogan cleared his throat, making his heavy jowls guiver.

"I must assume the worst for the crew," he said, "but not for the ship. I want it retrieving. I'm not going to let \$30 billion worth of Hi-Tech gear rot away in deep apace." He eyed me warily, "I want you to bring that ship back.....\$500,000 will be credited to your account on compietion of the mission."

He grinned, grossly. The sonovabitch knew I needed the cash. I could do nothing but accept.

And so the mission was presented, or rather forced upon you. The adventure starts with you having just arrived at the landing bay of the Alien Research Centre armed only with a decimator cannon which has been modified to affect only living matter. Typical! Brogan didn't even supply a map!

Both adventures have been written using a system created by Tom and Ian Smith with graphics provided by Shaun McClure. Both adventures are billed as 'Interactive Graphic Adventures' where the graphics form an active part of the location description. For example, if you open a door which is shown on screen then the location graphic will change to show this. Additionally, for any creatures or people you meet, they too will be shown as a part of the graphic while they are present. As soon as they move away, then the graphic is immediately updated to reflect this. The graphics for both adventures occupy the top third or so of the screen and are mostly very detailed and colourful. The text follows this and continues down to the bottom of the screen where commands are input. The text scrolls only within its own window and doesn't distract the graphics.

As you move around the A.R.C you will encounter several of the hostile creatures and must work quickly to dispose of them, otherwise you will be devoured, crushed or bitten to an early demise. The first creature you encounter will be the giant maggot which lumbers across a corridor not far from the start. When I hit upon the correct action to remove the maggot, a blood curdling howl (well, as blood curdling a howl as the Spectrum can muster) greeted me. This came as something of a pleasant surprise as the documentation makes no mention of this. Sounds you will hear, other than the howls from the remaining creatures, include an explosion and the zaps from your decimator cannon when blasting at anything resembling an alien life form.

The text input is restricted to the bottom line and is entered in double height characters which limits the input to about 20 characters maximum. Consequently, the format of the commands used is forced to be the classical 'verb/noun' style.

Hit.

The B-side to A.R.C contains a further adventure written with the same graphics system. Entitled 'Hit', it covers a period in 1920's America during Prohibition where the manufacture and sale of alcohol was forbidden by law. Gangsters built up black market operations and traded in illicit alcohol. If any people opposed the gangsters, either a 'pay-off' would ensure the black market operations were not affected, or 'hitmen' would be employed to eliminate them.

This adventure concerns such a scenario where the lady Mayor of Chicago, Cherry Reynolds, has had a contract put on her by a leading gangster, Bugs Macdowell. You take the part of Ricky Swift, a private investigator and high school friend of Cherry, and must fix Macdowell before one of his hitmen "...gift-wrapa Cherry in cement..."

You start in your office, and rummaging through your desk will uncover an address book with Cherry's address in it. You visit Cherry's house, but will find that she's not there. Some note paper mentions the Ritzberg Hotel, so you climb into your car and speed off once more. You find Cherry's room at the hotel easily enough, but she appears to have been drowning her sorrows on alcohol she is trying to outlaw! You won't get any sense out of her in this state, but you'll need something from Cherry to help you later on.

On several occasions you will encounter dark-suited mobsters, such as Harry 'Machine Gun' Magu, who are all quite prepared to blow you away with a short burst from their 'heaters' - complete with sound effects as mentioned earlier. Just play it cool and match the hoodlums at their own game. Don't ask for help though, Ricky Swift works alone.....

Both A.R.C and HIT are very enjoyable, competent adventures. The puzzles are all logical and of the right level to maintain interest through to the end. On the minus side, both adventures are fairly small and may be viewed as somewhat basic, not allowing TAKE ALL/IT etc., and not having memory save commands, but when all's said and done, both adventures are well worth playing - Hit in particular is an excellent bonus adventure.

In conclusion, buying A.R.C. gives you two contrasting and very playable adventures. The graphics are displayed instantly and commands are met with an immediate reply. The addition of the sound effects is quite a novel feature. In fact, I felt quite a sense of achievement when opening one of the A.R.C.'s outer hatches to see - and hear - the Vapour Wraith being sucked out into oblivion. The graphics are crisp and clear, and can even prompt you into action when faced with a gun toting mobster, staring at you from the screen. Additionally, the support from Zenith Software is second to none - both efficient and reliable. Recommended.

Available from: Zenith Software, 26 Sjotland Tops, Culgate,
Rochdale, Lancashire. OL12 7NX.

SPACE QUEST III

(The Pirates Of Pestulon)

(Sierra On-Line)

Reviewed by John R. Barnsley - Atari ST

When we last saw Roger Wilco, he was making a break from the fortrees of Sludge Vohaul in a one-man emergency spaceboat - Space Quest II. Nobody knows how long he drifted aimlessly through outer space.

Space Quest III begins with our hero floating silently through space. How far behind has he left the evil Sludge? Maybe hours, perhaps years. All we know is that Roger's spaceboat has been picked up by a robotic garbage transporter. Only quick thinking will keep him from being recycled as a lager can!

The ultimate objective is to save Scott Murphy and Mark Crowe, those illatirious 'Two Guys From Andromeda', who have been kidnapped by Scumsoft and forced to write inferior computer games. But first you will need to retreat from the roving recycler, tear apart the terrifying terminator, squelch the scurrying scorpazoid and prevail over the perilous Pirates of Pestulon (a take-off on the Pirates of Penzance!).

Space Quest III is not quite as linear a game as its predecessors. You are committed to the first and last scenes once you start them, but the middle part of the game is more flexible. Once you get into space, several locations become accessible, and you can fly back and forth between them as you like. You will have a bit of trouble walking around on Ortega before acquiring some kind of thermal protection, but you can go there, nonetheless.

The Pirates of Pestulon is also not nearly as puzzle-intensive as most of the Sierra On-Line adventures - but what it lacks in riddles, it makes up for in sheer magnificence of special effects. Sierra has once again pushed back the envelope. This time they even recruited Supertramp's Bob Siebenberg to write the soundtrack!

As with the other games made with the new Sierra Creative Interpreter (SCI), the graphics are wonderful: bright and crisp, revealing more detail than ever before and offering beautifully animated close-ups that add the kind of depth we could only dream of until now. In addition to maintaining Sierra's high standards of graphic excellence, Space Quest III adds a new dimension in detail. Several new video effects involving tricky manipulation of light and perspective are introduced. When Roger walks into an area that's deep in shadow, his colour darkens. When he walks under direct lighting, he brightens (of course, he wasn't that bright to begin with!). In some areas, he even casts a shadow against the wall.

While operating the fork lift, Roger's figure grows smaller or larger as he moves away from or toward the viewer. This effect is particularly dramatic on the planet Phleebutt (who thinks up these names?), where he struggles across sand dunes in several places.

By now most people are aware of the recent strides in enhanced sound. The sound effects are certainly impressive through my ordinary colour television, but I can only imagine the spectacular treats in store when suitable midi hardware is coupled up. Ad-Lib, IBM, Roland MT-32, Roland MT-100, and a stand-alone Midi card used with a Casio keyboard are all supported. If they handed Academy Awards for computer games, Space

Quest III would surely walk away with one for it's effective use of sound. In previous animated adventures, background music has always been restricted from screen to screen. This was used effectively in King's Quest IV by giving each character his own little theme song. In Pirates of Pestulon this has been taken a step further. Whole areas now have melodies that play uninterrupted as you cross from screen to screen, adding the feeling that you are actually participating in a film.

Of course, no Space Quest would be complete without the offbeat humour of the 'Two Guy's'. As you walk through the game, keep an eye on the background.....you might see some familiar old friends! Death has also been personalized. There have always been lots of ways to expire in Sierra adventures, but only a single message was displayed afterwards. Pirates of Pestulon has almost as many different messages as there are ways of getting killed. It has got to the point where it's almost as fun getting exterminated as it is playing the rest of the game.

Control of the central character is, as always, accomplished with the keypad, mouse or joystick. The parser is the advanced version that has been used in all the newest Sierra adventures. It is much stronger on synonyms and understands the pronoun 'IT' in limited situations, but is somewhat weak on multiple directives.

The only part that I had trouble with was the Astro Chicken arcade game - don't I always?! For some reason, I just could not control the chicken. After intense frustration, I finally developed the knack and had no further problems. There is a cryptic sequence near the end which will cause a severe strain on the eyes as you try to decode characters displayed on an ordinary television screen.....this particular sequence is not really necessary to complete the game, but since you would not otherwise find out what your mission is, Space Quest III doesn't seem complete if you bypass it. Such puzzles should be restricted to an extra point situation, so people could avoid them if they wished.

The game comes on three double-sided disks and the packaging includes a goofy facemask complete with a loony viewing strip.....a foretaste of the humour to come! Many people will be happy to learn that copy protection has been completely done away with on this game. Whether or not this practice continues probably relies on how many copies are sold as opposed to 'stolen'.

In conclusion, Space Quest III can be described as pure entertainment. graphics are faultless, the music is better than ever before and the story is a riot!





Good mornin' America, how are ya?

It was possibly the last time that we would be meeting up for a goodly number of weeks, and as beffited such an honourable occasion we were residing in the comfort of the saloon bar in The Waterwheel, close to Wigan but hardly an intimate part of the activities of the town. It being a mid-week lunchtime meant that there wasn't another soul in this particular section of the pub, just Strombrigner, Dimi, and I. I had previously passed on to the wizard and the dwarf Sandra's regrets at being unable to make the meeting: a small child being taken to hospital on account of a broken wrist was deemed acceptable to both. To Strombrigner because he thought it showed a rather touching motherly concern, and to Dimi because it indicated that the small chap was now skilled in the art of combat. I just saw it as the inevitable result of motherhood.

In his turn Strombrigner had conveyed apologies from the rabbit (that very important emissary for Windbreaker, the great leader of the wizards), who was also unable to attend, although no doubt for a very different reason. "However, master Petar" explained the wizard, "I gather that he has a message for you, which will be delivered 'ere long. There you will find the true meaning behind his failure to be present at this important event."

We were, as I have said, in the comfortable surroundings of what had become one of the wizard's favourite pubs. The dwarf favoured any pub that was open. We had previously purchased ale, three foaming pints now standing on the table before us, and as I was about to ask the wizard whether he would like a cigarette he pre-empted me and for once offered me one of his own. Chesterfield brand, a typically American cigarette, and as I accepted a light Strombrigner produced a stack of brochures from the inside of his voluminous cloak. They were all offering holidays in America at incredible discounts, and all bore an unmistakable stamp. In large, bold, purple letters were the words "Holidays a speciality. Harry the Fence." Not a stamp for optimism, I would have thought.

The wizard proudly lay the brochures open on a nearby table, and said "there, what do you think to that?"

"Schlitz" grunted the dwarf, causing us both to look at him in amazement. "Beer" he grunted, "Milwaukee, famous."

From that we gathered that Schlitz was the beer that made Milwaukee famous, although how anywhere could be proud of a beer that bore a name like that was way beyond me. Leaving aside the question of beer, I prodded at the brochures. "So what's all this then?" I asked Strombrigner, "annual leave?"

I must have smiled as I spoke, because the wizard addressed me somewhat sternly. "My dear boy, we are all entitled to our leisure time, and as I have had the good fortune to go to America once before in my life I would like to take the opportunity of introducing my friend to that very same place."

"Bourbon" grunted Dimi, his one track mind beginning to show itself.

"But Harry the Fence!" I protested, "can you really trust him to arrange a holiday for you? I mean, he's not exactly honest is he?"

Strombriger looked around in horror, and even Dimli shuffled his feet nervously, although there was nobody else in sight. "Silence!" thundered the wizard, "speak not ill of this man. Al Mufti, 3.45, Epsom, by the way. Harry the Fence is a perfectly respectable travel agent. Besides, I have, as you are no doubt well aware, already used my free travel pass spell for the year."

I had to admit that the wizard was correct, and thought back briefly to our jaunt in Australia. Only briefly, and even then the influence of Harry the Fence made itself felt as I conjured up visions of bringing back vast quantities of duty free alcohol and tobacco without the hindrance of the customs' men and women. Then it was back to matters in hand.

"You are going on holiday soon then?" I asked. "For how long?"

"We are going as soon as we decide where to go, and we are going for as long as is necessary. We have both been given indefinite compassionate leave by Windbreaker for our part in the affair of the bi-fingual orc. But" said the wizard, raising both hands and staring my intervention, "that story must wait for another time. For now master Dimli and I must pour over these boundes scrollis and establish a time and a place. Dimli, here."

Strombriger handed one of the brochures to the dwarf, producing the grunted comment "Jack Daniels" in return. With a sigh Strombriger strode to the bar, and returned with two pints of bitter and what appeared to be a double scotch. He presented the latter to Dimli and said "here, Jack Daniels, you asked for it." A hand snaked out from behind a brochure and brought the glass to the dwarf's mouth. A hasty swallow of half the contents, an up-raised eyebrow, then all attention was back to the brochure. Strombriger sighed again and sat down, picking up his own pint as he did so. "Your good health" he said to me, ruefully, and we drank in peace and comfort.

As I returned my own glass to the table I said to the wizard "you said that you'd had the good fortune to visit America before. Where and when was that?"

"You do ask so many questions, master Peter, but I would be a fool to mind. Indeed" he added, twinkle in his eye, "the stories do usually end up as entertaining ones, do they not? Ah yes, America."

From the way that the wizard leaned back in the comfortably padded chair I could tell that the talk would be long in the telling, and so went over to study the jukebox for a while until Strombriger had composed himself and was ready to begin his narration. A record caught my eye, and by the time I had selected it and returned to my seat the record had begun to play.

Strombriger sat bolt upright. "Mark!" he screeched, "tis the chant of a necromancer! We are in mortal danger, we are -"

"Listening to Bruce Springsteen" I interrupted, "singing Born in the USA."

The wizard considered this, while Dimli remained rooted deep inside his brochure. "Some sort of crooner?" he ventured, at length.

"An American sort of crooner singing about America" I told him, thinking that the connection with America might serve to put him at his ease.

"Ah" said Strombrigner gravely. "Things have changed since I were last there."

At last! We were back on the topic again. "You keep telling me that you've been there, but you don't tell me anything about it."

"Oh very well then, if you insist." There was a slight pause while the wizard refilled his pipe and Dimli's hand snaked briefly out from behind the brochure and grabbed his drink, and then Strombrigner began to speak again. "It was in the last century that a curious affair did come to the attention of the wizards' guild, and I was despatched with some haste to the shores of America to seek out a certain giant of a man who was being exhibited in a travelling circus."

"Another search for a scroll?"

"No, merely the giant. Rumour had it that he was a troll escaped from a very important cave who had to be brought back. As I eventually found out he was nothing of the sort, but oh, the adventures that I had in tracking him down."

"But you found him in the end?"

"Of course, I have never failed yet." Strombrigner darted a glance at Dimli, who was listening keenly to the story for once, possibly because he hadn't featured in it, but the expression on the dwarf's face gave nothing away and the wizard was allowed to continue with unblemished character.

"Yes, it was a long and dangerous search that took me a day and night, but eventually I found the giant. He was what they referred to as the 'star' of this American circus, and as soon as I saw him I realised that he was not the troll that we were looking for. Nevertheless, something about his appearance made me feel pity, and I was determined to release him. Unfortunately, being the star of the show, he was kept in chains day and night so as to prevent his escape. No weapons were ever placed near him, because of his fearsome strength, so I watched and waited, hiding my time until opportunity presented itself."

"Which I presume it did?" I said.

"After a long wait" continued the wizard, arching his eyebrows as if not sure whether I were being sarcastic or not, "I seized my chance. Some careless person had left a large spanner lying about on the floor, and I eagerly grabbed it up and threw it to the giant. He mistook my instantness at first, and crushed the spanner to a pulp, but then recognition dawned on him. He was quite alone on the upstage, poor chap. He took the battered spanner and with it managed to break his bonds with a ferocious blow. He snapped aside the bars of his cage as if they were nothing, and bounded off into the wilderness, a free man at last. I crept back into the background and surreptitiously made my way back to the land where wizards lurk. Mission accomplished, if not entirely successful."

Strombrigner sat upright. "And that was how the American national anthem came to be written. Come, Dimli, we must away and take our farewell of master Petar, our holiday is settled."

The two of them stood up, which in Dimli's case made his legs shakier than ever, and shook me warmly by the hand. "We will be back 'ere long" said Strombrigner,

"and will report on our adventures in this vast land. Rest assured master Peter, we will be seeing you again before too long."

The started making their way towards the door, and I stopped them with a cry of "wait! What's all this about the American national anthem?"

Strombrigner belted, and smiled. "Ah yes" he said, "the American national anthem. Some enterprising chap saw a headline in the local Bugle the very next day, and was inspired to write a song."

With ill-disguised impatience, I asked "and what was the headline?"

"Giant escapes from circus! Only clue - the star-spangled spanner!"

Report from America coming soon ...

ASK GRUE!

Dear GRUE!

Some of my friends in the playground told me that opening a disk drive while it is running can cause warts. Is this true?

SIGNED Worried about warts.

Dear Wart,

To answer your question I went straight to an expert. Professor Humbick Q Fiddleberry, Department Head of Oxford University's Dermatology and Computer Science. He claims there is no chance of getting warts from opening a disk drive, unless of course, there is a frog inside it.

Dear GRUE!

I don't own an Infocom game. As a result people think I am really weird. It's not fair though as I don't have a computer so I don't need an Infocom game. I wouldn't call that weird, I call that practical. How can I make people understand that and accept me as I am.

Dear No G.U.E.

You cannot change the way people think. So what you have to do is find people who think the same way you do. Unbelievable as it may seem, there is someone who likes you. You've guessed it - Bob Adams.

Dear GRUE!

I don't believe that your name is really Grum!

SIGNED A Non Believer.

Dear NDN,

It really is Grue, honest. Anyway would I tell you the name of the Pilgrim, well I might. Ok, if you must know, my real name is GEORGE DAVIES. Satisfied?!

If you need help of advice with a problem then write to ASK GRUE!

THE ADVENTURE THAT GOT ME HOOKED

By Mandy

It was about five years ago that I met my first computer. We had been thinking of buying one for some time but hadn't the faintest idea what we would need or where to start. I wandered into Dixons and enquired about them and before I knew where I was I had agreed to buy a Commodore 64. The salesman was a very enthusiastic young man and I soon found myself carried away with the whole caboodle which included disc drive ("Madam simply has to have one of those!"), printer ("They are on special offer you know!"), and loads of boxes of special offer packages to go with it. I finally arrived home and unpacked them. I remember my bewilderment as I stood there, surrounded by boxes and strange, newfangled equipment, clutching a load of leads with assorted din plugs on the ends! I hadn't the faintest idea where to start. Luckily hubby arrived home in time to take over and I retreated into the kitchen to supply some coffee "fixins" whilst he got on with it. Of course we got the manuals out and typed in a few programs (none of which seemed to work!) and I remember distinctly remarking that I would take the whole lot back as the blasted thing couldn't speak plain English! Then I typed in a program which created the sound of a gunshot and it actually worked! I remember typing run whilst my little boy ran around the room with his toy gun, the volume turned up full and we were hooked!

With the disc drive came a disc of ten free games and we soon got involved in the novel art of joystick wielding and shooting everything that came up on screen. It was great fun. The last program on the disc of games was called THE QUEST and I duly loaded this up, plugged in the joystick and waited for the action to start. I was amazed to see on screen the words "You are standing before the entrance to a dark cave. Heavy rain is falling all around you. What now?" There were no little men running around to shoot at all! I had never seen or even heard of an adventure game before so my only conclusion was that the game had crashed. I then typed in the only command that I knew which was RUN. I nearly fell off my chair in amazement when, as quick as a flash back came the response "In which direction?" Oh joy of joys! What bliss! Here was the computer answering me back in plain English! I experimented with a few words and soon got the hang of it when I typed IN and found myself inside the cave. After wandering around for a while I was hopelessly lost and soon discovered the adventurers aid - mapping. Very crude at first but I soon got the hang of it and when I found my first key and managed to open a door I was hooked for life!

The adventure was a very large one with puzzles galore. Not the easiest adventure for a novice to start out on which is why it took me over six months to complete I suppose. The plot was that I had to battle my way through the caverns and mazes to find the Guardian, a six armed chappie who had come to earth thousands of years before. He was a very clever fellow who was supposed to know the answer to everything.

I suppose everyone looks upon their very first adventure with special fondness but I believe that there is, indeed something very special about your first one. All the puzzles and problems stay alive in your memory long after the ones in later adventures fade. But now, for me, there is nothing to beat a round of fistcuffs with a taciturn dwarf or an hour or two of troll bashing. What on earth, I wonder, would I do without an adventure to play now? More puzzling still is what on earth did I do with my spare time before I discovered them?

Are you a real Adventurer?

Do you stare adversity in the face? Do you snap your fingers at demons and wizards? Do you wander around mazes quite happily without making a map? Or do you tip-toe around, ensuring a plentiful supply of torches and making exhaustive use of the RAMSAVE command? This less than definitive checklist will sort the real adventurers from the occasional wanderers.....

Real Adventurers.....

- 1) ...look upon Don Woods and Willie Crowther as old friends.
- 2) ...never use a full solution.
- 3) ...always save before attacking an enemy.
- 4) ...never buy an adventure with '13' in the title because it's unlucky.
- 5) ...aren't superstitious.
- 6) ...never give axe throwing dwarfs a second chance.
- 7) ...always make a map.
- 8) ...played through the Hobbit several times, and then said how awful it was.
- 9) ...didn't bother playing Lord Of The Rings after seeing what the Hobbit was like.
- 10) ...thought Valhalla was a neat idea.
- 11) ...are always approachable, even when telephoned at 4.00 am with "Where do I find the Magic Orb?"
- 12) ...are not perturbed by seemingly impossible mazes.
- 13) ...ask for pints of bitter when in wine bars.
- 14) ...ask for tequila slammers when in pubs.
- 15) ...often forget where they are when going out for the night.
- 16) ...are frequently accused of being hard of hearing.
- 17) ...consume vast quantities of coffee during long adventuring sessions.
- 18) ...neatly avoid the question of 'text versus graphics'.
- 19) ...CAN actually kill dragons with their bare hands.
- 20) ...often use pseudonyms to preserve their real identities.
- 21) ...frequently find themselves in embarrassing situations when shouting aloud their latest ideas: "I've got to twst the Goblin's wotsit!".
- 22) ...forget, quite often too late, that the 5 1/4" disk containing their current saved game is not a drinks mat.
- 23) ...spent hours typing in BASIC adventure listings from magazines before realising that they would know the solutions in advance of playing them anyway.
- 24) ...are not concerned with the argument of whether Dungeon Master is a real adventure, but wonder instead if they can justify buying an ST or Amiga.
- 25) ...realise that the adventuring days of the ZX81 are numbered.
- 26) ...are a helpful breed, and even if they can't help you with a specific problem, 'they know a man who can'.
- 27) ...have never heard of an adventure written with 'Genesis'.
- 28) ...have never heard of anyone writing an adventure with 'Genesis'.
- 29) ...would avoid anyone reputed to have written an adventure with 'Genesis'.
- 30) ...can use at least one programming language; either the 'Quill' 'GAC' or 'PAWS'.
- 31) ...will still be playing adventures in the year 2000, on their 64-bit, parallel processing, multi tasking workstations.....

*** NEWS ***

THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE MICRO SHOW AND ELECTRONICS FAIR

Will be held on Saturday 11th November 1989 at Bingly Hall, Staffordshire Show Centre from 10am - 5pm. A feature of this event will be a "Giant Bring & Buy Sale". The organisers tell me that this will be of special interest to owners of Spectrum, BBC, Atari 8 bit, QL, Einstein, Oric, Enterprise, Memotech, MSX, Adam, ZX88, Lynx, Dragon, Commodore 64, Jupiter Ace, Texas TI99-4A as well as other micros.

For further details telephone Ipswich (0473) 602460
Fax - (0473) 602410

THE SCOTTISH MICRO SHOW

Will be held on Saturday 18th November 1989 at The Forum, Almondvale West, Livingston. (Just off the M8 Edinburgh to Glasgow Motorway). This new show is being organised by B & H Computers and at last brings a show to Scotland supporting the minority micros. There will be free parking for 600 cars, a licensed bar and cafeteria. Full details are available from B & H Computers in Halifax, telephone 0422 52905.

THE 8 BIT MICRO SHOW

Will be held on Sunday 26th November 1989 from 10am - 5pm at The Arta Centre, Tamworth. The show will cater for all types of Spectrum, Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC, MSX, Electron, BBC, Atari XL/XE and if one or more user group for the following micros turn up then, Memotech, Lynx, Enterprise, C16, Plus 4, Einstein, Dragon, Vic 20, Texas, ZX81, Oric, Atmos, Jupiter Ace, Aquarius and Sord 5. Machines like the ST, Amiga, Archimedes, PC won't make an appearance. The show is aimed mainly at leisure software and hardware. There will be many attractions including raffles and highest score competitions etc. For further details write to:

8 Bit Micro Show, 8 Healey, Lakeside, Tamworth, Staffs, B77 2RF

SAD NEWS FROM LEVEL 9

Level 9 have now made the definite decision not to produce any further text adventures. Scapegoat (release date imminent) is going to be their very last text adventure. Future releases are going to be on their new system which is graphic only, joystick operated. Even worse news is that, at present, they plan to release games created on their new system for Amiga, Atari ST and one or two of the other 16 bit machines only and they are no longer supporting the smaller micros.

Personally I think that they are making a big mistake. I appreciate that they have to move with the times but what about all the customers who have supported them over the years? As a Level 9 fan and 8 bit micro owner I cannot help feeling that I have been let down. Rather like getting a slap in the face with a piece of wet cod!.....Mandy

ARCANIA

Tales of magic, and magical gems
From which a mystical power stems.
Mysterious islands where treasures abound,
Arcania, Arcania, the legendary land...

So sings the minstrel as you sit in the tavern, and you dream of adventure, of the gems, and of islands that seem to be your idea of paradise. Born in Isharnia, you have come to the coast to seek passage in a vessel heading towards Arcania, but no captain will sail that way. Too many ships have gone missing in the hazardous waters and it is many years since anyone has risked venturing across the Last Ocean. But an old man senses your wish, and it is not long before you find yourself on a strange island...

ARCANIA is a professional, single character, hand-moderated, fantasy role-playing postal game. It is open-ended with no deadlines, so you are free to send in your turns when you wish and combat takes a back seat to pure role playing. Seek the gems, go on quests, or just explore the islands and try to learn the secrets that are waiting to be discovered.

STARTUP costs £5.00 and comprises two free turns, background information, character generation sheets, sample sheets, maps, including a colour map of the first island you visit, and a copy of the Arcania Gazette.

TURNS will cost £1.75 each, with no hidden extras. All copies of the Gazette, additional maps and supplements are included, and returns consist of at least one side of an A4 word-processed page (usually longer).

Send cheque/P.O. (or an sse for more information) to:

MARLIN GAMES,
19 Briar Close, Nailsea,
Bristol BS19 1OG

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ATARI ST ADVENTURE GAMES

* SHARDS OF TIME *

THE PROBLEM: A recent experiment into extended time jumps has shattered the time crystal into 3 fragments. This has thrown the Earth's time continuum into a state of confusion.

THE SOLUTION: You will need to reassemble the time crystal.

THE MISSION: Travel back in time to the Ice Age, the Middle Ages, and the 18th Century and recover the 3 fragments.

FEATURES: Violent cavemen, a plague ridden village, the volcanic island of Krakatoa, field agents, time capsules, and lots of ways to die.

PRICE: £7.95

ENHANCED VERSION: Owners of Atari 1040 ST/FM's can purchase a graphically enhanced version for just £8.95

* BLACKSCAR MOUNTAIN *

THE PROBLEM: A malevolent demon which resides on the very summit of the mountain has placed a curse on the surrounding countryside.

THE SOLUTION: You will need to kill the demon.

THE QUEST: You will have to make your way through the labyrinth of monster infested tunnels and caves that honeycomb the mountain. Once on the summit you will need to do battle with the demon itself.

FEATURES: Thirsty Vampires, hungry Trolls, greedy Goblins, things that slither in the dark. Chests full of gold and chests full of arrows (if you are not careful). This game has recently been modified so as to allow more flexibility of movement. The game now accepts easier alternate solutions to some of the harder problems.

PRICE: £7.95

ENHANCED VERSION: Owners of Atari 1040 ST/FM's can purchase a graphically enhanced version for just £8.95

* SPECIAL OFFER *

Buy both of the above games for just £14.95. Buy both enhanced versions of the above games for just £16.95.

Post and packing is free in the UK, and £1 for anywhere else. All orders/enquiries should be sent to TITAN GAMES, 45 WINDMILL LANE, WORKSOP, NOTTS. S80 250. TEL: 0909 483017

* * * * * FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES PRESENT * * * * *

MAGNETIC MOON

In this 3 part, text only, science fiction adventure, your spaceship has been dragged down onto a strange moon by a tractor beam, and now lies in the grip of a magnetic field, unable to take off. Your captain calls for volunteers to search for the source of the magnetic field, and you are one of the first to step forward. To your horror, the captain refuses to let you go, saying that you are needed on board to help the 1st Lieutenant supervise repairs! You want to get in on the action, and decide to jump ship and search for the source of the magnetic field yourself! However, first you must get off the ship without the captain or the 1st lieutenant catching you....!

MAGNETIC MOON is available in 48k and 128k versions, both at £3.49 - but see below for a special offer!

* * * * * AVAILABLE SOON!! The long-awaited, 3 part sequel to "Magnetic Moon".....

STARSHIP QUEST

After freeing the "Stellar Queen" from the grip of the "Magnetic Moon", the spaceship is now heading for a hyperspace jump to Rigel III, in order to get the injured Commander Gilem, who you rescued from the wrecked "Pathfinder", to proper medical facilities. The commander has given you information that leads you to believe that the secret of the two discs that the beautiful priestess Jaelmine gave you - the "Keys to the Universe" - may be found on the planet the "magnetic moon" orbits. Your captain says it is impossible for the ship to stop or turn back so that you can return to the mother planet, so you realise that you will have to go it alone again, and jump ship! But you have only TWO MINUTES before the ship goes into hyperspace! Can you find some equipment and get off the ship in time? What perils await you on the abandoned planet?? Play STARSHIP QUEST and find out!!

STARSHIP QUEST will be available, in 48k and 128k versions, at the beginning of October. The 128k version has more puzzles and locations, plus HELP messages in many locations. Price of both versions will be £3.99, but you can order your copy in advance for only £3.49! SPECIAL OFFER!!!! Order a copy of MAGNETIC MOON at the same time and you can have the two for only £5.99!!! Note that this offer will close on October 30th, so order both of these adventures NOW!!

Send your cheque/PO, stating which Spectrum computer you have, to:-

FSF ADVENTURES, 40 Harvey Gardens, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ

Remember:

MAGNETIC MOON only = £3.49 STARSHIP QUEST (advance order) only = £3.49
MAGNETIC MOON and STARSHIP QUEST = £5.99

Coming Soon!!! A version of MAGNETIC MOON for the Amstrad CPC and PCW!! Watch this space for further details!!!

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Destroy the evil Orc Lord while avoiding his evil minions in this two part fantasy and mythical adventure.

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Watch this space for news of new adventures. We are always looking for good quality adventures to expand our catalogue. If you have written a QUILled or PAWed adventure why not send it to us for evaluation.

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9 WARWICK ROAD, SIDCUP, KENT, DA14 6LJ.

PRECISION CORNER - by Jay Gee - Amstrad

RETURN TO DOOM

Purple Sage. Note direction from which the cyclone is approaching and do one of the following:-

North, go ss, s. South, go sw, n. East, go sw, w. West, go ne, e. Now wait until blown to the random location containing the glass disc, get disc and wait until the cyclone stops. Go west as far as possible when one of the following will take you to the Bend:-

N, nw. Nw, n, nw. Sw, nw.

Zero Gravity Corridor on a raft. Pressing shapes will change speed and direction as follows:-

Rectangle, N. Rhomboid, S. Oval, E. Spiral, W.
Must be stationary to change direction from N/S to E/W and E/W to N/S. Press oval, wait, press spiral, press spiral, press oval (stationary), get and wear boots, press spiral, press oval, press oval, wait, press spiral (stationary by Southward Corridor), press rhomboid, wait, press rectangle, press rectangle, press rhomboid (stationary at Junction of N/S and E/W corridors), press spiral, press oval, press oval, wait, press spiral, press spiral, press oval (stationary at the north end of Southward Corridor and need fast speed to break through the light at the south end), press rhomboid, press rhomboid, press rhomboid and in Metallic Circular Corridor (the enzymes stop you reaching the exit to the east), n and you are Upside Down, e, e.



LETTERS



Could I please, through the letters page of Probs, thank Doreen Bardon and Barbara Bassingthwaite for all the help they have given to me when I became stuck in some adventures.

JIM DONALDSON, Connolly, 132 Stamford St, Glasgow, G31 4AW

I would like to thank the most honest and kind people I've ever come across in the Adventure world who without help from them in one way or another (they know what I mean) would be lost in the maze of Arcade games. Thank you, not in order of merit! Joan Pancott, Lorna Paterson, Bob Adams, Seamus D'Neill, Mandy Rodrigues and Sandra Sharkey. Also I'd like to give a mention to John Packham games, they are Panic Beneath the Sea and City for Ransom. At the price they are excellent value and have given me a few brain teasing hours, I can tell you. I highly recommend them to Probe readers.

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Dismal St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, NE24 1JB

I have now settled down back in Australia. I must admit although I enjoyed my stay in England it is nice to be back in my own house. I have recently set up an adventure (Text only not RPG) helpline here in Australia, so if anyone in this part of the world would like to contact me for assistance I will be only too pleased to help in any way I can. Unlike England there is very little support for adventurers here and no magazines such as Probe. In Australia the ST isn't doing as well as the Amiga and Commodore is much stronger than Spectrum which is almost non-existent. Sometimes I wish I had a Spectrum just so I could play some of the adventures advertised in Probe.

DOROTHY MILLARD, 12 Venetian Crt, Croydon, Vic. 3136, Australia

I have an Atari 130XE and although it does everything I could hope for, I have been told it is a waste of time keeping it because of the lack of new software for this machine, especially adventures. Therefore I feel that I am being forced into buying an ST, just because I like playing adventures. I have phoned software houses about this and they all say that their turnover on Atari software is not high enough to be able to accept any losses through people copying their programmes, so all I can say to this is thank you very much pirates and I hope you all end up losing out. I am just sorry that most Atari Users have to pay for your selfish attitude.

JOHN WILDEY, 20 Isleay Court, St. Ruis St, Wandsworth Rd, London SW8 3LP

Thanks for the latest issue of Probs - I really enjoyed it. I am writing in mainly to appeal to all your wonderful readers. Does anyone know where I can get my hands on any of the following games for my Amiga, Reginald, as it will soon be his birthday (as good a reason as any for buying lots of adventures, I think you'll agree). Zork I, II or III, Planetfall or Stationfall, Wishbringer and any of the Enchanter trilogy, all by Infocom. My usual software dealer tells me that the early Infocom games are very rare on the Amiga. If nobody knows of a dealer, then does anyone have a second hand version they

don't want any more and could sell me?

I was delighted to hear that Infocom are still going strong. Although some of their best writers have left it was good to hear that they would still be working for Infocom on a freelance basis. I only have one moan about the latest Infocom games, and that is the on-screen hints facility. When playing adventures I have no self-control at all, and I can't resist looking up the answers, so that I can get further on in the adventure. Adventurers don't play the games just for the puzzles, they play them because they want to discover more about the world the writer had created, and puzzles are an obstacle to this. The hints are available much too easily, and while I know that it's decreasing the final satisfaction of finishing the adventure I just can't seem to stop myself. So am I the only person without any self-control when it comes to full solutions being sent with games? Do other readers think it is a good idea for companies to enclose solution sheets with their adventures, as Level 9 have done with a couple of times? Are coded hints like the ones in Magnetic Scrolls games any better?

EMMA HEGGIE, 16 Riverbourne Rd, Milford, Salisbury, Wilts, SP1 1NS

(You are most certainly not the only one with no willpower when it comes to hints, solutions etc. I have lost count of the times I have ruined an adventure for myself by peeking at solutions before I really need to. I look up the answer to my problem and then find myself reading further on before I can stop myself. Knowing that there is a solution to hand has the effect of "switching off" my brain and thinking powers but there are readers, I know, who have a will of iron and can have a solution to hand and never refer to it until the game is completed when they then refer to it to see if they have missed anything or didn't get a full score. I too would love to know what other readers think about this.....Mandy)

=====

I see in the early issues of Adventure Probe that they contained maps which I found useful, (as long as the solution is not with it) as you know where everything is but you still have to try and work out how to get past a secret door, sneak or cross chess etc. As you know in most adventures you have to perform some special deed or other to get from one location to the next but if you have the solution with it, it makes it too easy as you have nothing to work out, so I find the maps themselves better as they don't give all the answers. What do you think (maps or full solutions)? Any chance of printing any more maps please?

JAMES DONALDSON, Connelly, 132 Stamford St, Glasgow, G31 4AW

(The early issues of Probe usually contained a map or two but when Probe's sister magazine "Soothsayer" was born it was agreed that Probe wouldn't print maps and full solutions and Soothsayer wouldn't print the items which were normally featured in Probe. When Spellbreaker took over from Soothsayer earlier this year I came to the same agreement with the Editor Mike Breilsford. This is also why the Solution of the Month was dropped from Probe too and Probe only continued with serialised solutions.....Mandy)

=====

At long last my moment of glory has come, I can help someone with an adventure! Namely John and Anthony Curran on SOLARIS. Examine fire extinguisher to find pin, PULL PIN, then pick the door lock with the pin. To progress further you need to find the BLASTER which you should fire at the door in the canteen though I've yet to find it. I also need to find the screwdriver and spanner. For Chris Huff, stuck in Twice Shy. At caravan site go to No 33, say to Jane "Where's Ted", go E until you reach car then N, E, E and Up. Give tapes to Ted, now wander around the school until Ted calls you, get all then go O, W, W, S and go back to your house by car and wait for a phone call! I don't know why you want to go to Norwich but I think you want to go to Mason, Miles Assos in which case from your sitting room go S, ENTER or START CAR, E, N, fill up with petrol, N, N, N, E, N, N, N, STOP CAR, S, E, and check locker for something interesting. If you let me know where Gilberts house is I'll tell you what to do. Before I close I would like to thank the chap in Wales who sent me a beautifully typed letter offering help. I'm sorry I've misplaced your letter, I didn't mean to ignore your offer of help.

E.FRY,6 Birchdale Ave,Wrockwardine Wood,Telford,Shropshire.TF2 6QL
=====

I am writing to ask whether you could please advertise ACORN SOFT. We are a new adventure and arcade producing software house aimed at producing cheap adventure and arcade games. Our price for all the games we are going to produce is going to be £1.80. Could you please tell your readers that anyone who has written an adventure on QUILL, GAC and PAW or has written an adventure to send a copy to us and we will consider producing it. If we decide to produce it the writer will receive 10p per copy sold and a further £10 bonus every hundred. If you would be kind enough to tell your readers this we would be most grateful.

PHILIP BIRK,ACORN SOFT,41 Windsor Walk,South Anston,Sheffield,531 7EL
=====

I must write to point out that while you were giving Tom Frost an example of how you mess up jokes (last month's letters) you made a mess of the actual joke! To "get a monkey to speak" you'd have to take it through the Mersey Tunnel and turn RIGHT. (This applies to both tunnels). You could, of course, take it through either tunnel from Liverpool and turn left at Wallasey or Birkenhead, cross the bridge over the river at Runcorn, then turn left again for Speke, I suppose. But that's a bit of a long haul. Actually, I think, all things considered, it would be easier for all concerned to purchase a plane ticket at say Manchester and fly direct to Speke airport. This would take only a few minutes and would cut out traffic queues and tunnel tolls. Then again, I'm not sure if they would allow the monkey on the plane in the first place - no, of course they would - the Australians allowed Ian Botham on a plane and he's Guy the Gorilla and he didn't cause TOO much havoc, did he?

Actually, come to think of it, you'd be better off going through the tunnel and turning left because there's naff all for a monkey to do in Speke anyway!

PAUL CAROIN,3 Lonsdale Villas,Wallasey,Merseyside,L45 4PG

(Eeeek! Looks like I knobbled another joke! Now you know that I don't tell fibs. Now I know why nobody laughed at the "silly section"! Did I ever tell you the joke about the man who... Nah! Better not....Mandy)

I write to tell you all of the terrible fate which has befallen me since my letter in the September issue of Probe telling of my decision to sell my Infocom games. A mere two days after this was published I received by first post... no, not an order, but a DEATH THREAT!!! This was postmarked apparently in Liverpool and signed by the I.L.L. (er... Infocom Lovers League?? Or... Idiotic Luny Left!). I have been placed as Number One on the hit list above Salman Rushdie and the Head of Activision U.K.!! I was inclined to laugh it all off but my good lady was very frightened and insisted that I contact the Police.

On my return from work I was searching the front garden for small Yellow Grouches (they run in from the hay-fields to hide and unfortunately attract the Giant Corbie birds to come hunting) when I was hailed across the hedge row by Sergeant Plod as he cycled down the lane on his nightly quest to catch the Chocolate Truffula pomegranates amongst the mists of Froom Wood. I seized my opportunity and called him over to explain the situation. He listened politely, wrote in his notebook, and then said that he was sorry but he didn't understand these new fangled Atari things but would pass it all on to his superiors.

The following morning we were awoken by a disgruntled member of the local C.I.D. who wished to examine the letter. He was very sceptical as he read my name and still dithered as he read Salman Rushdie's but the second that he saw the Head of Activision on the list his face changed and he said that this threat must obviously be treated as a serious one.

A swift telephone call was made and before we knew it the house was surrounded by armed members of the Special Branch. We were strongly advised to go into hiding and after much deliberation I allowed my wife and children to be spirited away. They are now under 24 hour guard "Somewhere in Britain", not even I know of their exact whereabouts.

I do not believe that I have been disloyal to the Spirit of Infocom as there are people who may not be able to afford or now even obtain these adventures from another source. I am remaining at my telephone in case there should be someone out there who still wishes to purchase any of the remaining adventures from my collection. Please see the advert on IN-TOUCH page.

This would have been the end of my apathy, but further events have just occurred, so I continue. I had spoken to my guards of my original fear after writing my last letter, namely, an attack from the GRUE! and/or his relatives. The guards did not even understand what a Grue was and when enlightened showed such concern. Even as I write the house has been rigged by three Government Surplus ex World War Two searchlights powered from a portable generator which is motivated by a computer controlled audio device tuned to the exact frequency of a bark uttered by my faithful dog Jasper the Invincible.

Jasper is a highly intelligent dog who has already had many adventures in his short life. Using his superior senses he can detect a Grue at 87 paces when the wind is right (even less distance when the wind is left....but we all know what Grues are like on that score, don't we!!) This is all I can say for now, except to ask, that if any reader could offer any help or advice I would be most appreciative. Please get in touch with me through the pages of this good journal as the majority of my personal mail is being utterly destroyed by my guards continuously eliminating what they deem as suspect letter bombs.

Harvously yours,
CLIVE SWAIN, 15 Bannister Close, Greatford, Middx, UB6 0SW
=====

Telephone: 0674-74229

TARTAN SOFTWARE,
61, Ballis Morris Crescent,
MONTROSE.
Angus
Scotland
DD10 9DT
16th September 1989

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BOSS OF ZENOBI SOFTWARE

Dear XXXXXX,

I am afraid you will have to fill in XXXXXX yourself as I really am not sure who the BOSS is! Is it BALROG or even the oat or perhaps it could be a smoky character by the name of John Wilson. I am led to believe that this Wilson person is of Scottish origin as he CAN not be all bad can he?

A famous Scottish poet once started one of his poems with words something like:- "Oh great leader of the puddin' race....." and I always thought he was addressing this Wilson person but apparently these words refer to the HAGGIS and you do know now what that looks like.....a sickly yellow colour and rather round and fat ...well perhaps I WAS right after all!

As a Scot myself I can always admire a crafty bit of free advertising and that drawing of a toilet in the September issue of PROBE to publicise your range of BEHIND CLOSED DOORS adventures was a gem. At first I thought that Vicky Jackson had submitted a map for BEHIND CLOSED DOORS and had forgotten to mention whether it was for part 1, 2 or 3!

I have noticed that my address makes a guest appearance in the latest (and I sincerely hope not the last) BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, as a response to HELP. Well, John or Zeno or dear pass or BOSS, this little ploy has slightly back-fired. I would suspect that you have been rather less than forthcoming with previous prices for HELP, as all of the ones that I have received have been accompanied by a bribe in the form of pound notes. What shall I do with these BOSS? Fortunately I have played the adventure (very decidedly up to your usual standard) and I have passed on the necessary HELP!

I would also inform you that my legal advisor considers that whisperings into the ear of a dragon MAY constitute slander. If you care to contact ZEIN he will inform you that his written remarks about the volatility of whisky at the Awards Ceremony did not go un-noticed! The foregoing refers, of course, to that other brilliant ZENOBI adventure RETARDED CREATURES AND CAVEBNS, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Some rather unjustified comments in the sniff-glorying MM regarding some ZENOBI work.....GORDELLO is next and I am quaking at the knees!

Good playtesters are hard to find so I have sent on all the poised notes to:- BUGGERS CHARITY (addressed in some places in Tillycountry). Incidentally, if playtesters are debuggers what does that make us?

We all look forward to your next releases with poised forefingers, but examine the next TARTAN releases with care when some vengeance may be extracted.

Cheers

From the "official" ZENOBI HELP-LINE!

HELP WANTED



"Please could someone help me on DRILLER, TOTAL ECLIPSE (I know they are not adventures but I'm still stuck for a solution), NDT A PENNY MORE etc, WAR OF THE WORLDS, RETURN TO D2, SOLARIS, MICRO DRIVING and MAD MARTHA 11??"

E.FRY, 6 Birchdale Rd, Wrockwardine Wood, Telford, Shropshire, TF2 6QL
=====
"I would be very grateful if someone could help me with the following problems. In INTRUDER ALERT, how do I get past the gas cloud by the Luminous Cave? In SKELVULLYN TWINE (PT 3) Can you take the rope at the beginning and if so, is it used to get across the gap after climbing the tree? In LABOURS OF HERCULES, how can I stop the Minotaur attacking me in the Labyrinth? In THE SECRET OF LITTLE HOLLOWEVE I can't get by the Guardian of Xanoe - I'd guess that I need the Holy Water but I can't find anything to put it in! Any help at all would be appreciated."

STEVE LOOEY, 5 Felix Rd, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7JD

=====
"I was wondering if any of your readers could help in the following two games: NIGHTWING - What's the code for Superbrain? WARRIOR - What use is the blue slab?"

JOHN SYMINGTON, 24 Edenmore Dr, Andersonstown, Belfast, BT11 8LT

=====
"Any help on how to get started in Scott Adams STRANGE ODYSSEY would be appreciated, in particular concerning a piece of plastic and a rod jutting out from a wall found in a cave."

IAN DOWDALL, 48 Avon Green, South Ockendon, Essex, RM15 8QJ

=====
"Could anyone please provide some help with MORTVILLE MANSION, this is a most frustrating game to play. You are cast in the role of Detective investigating a murder but if you try to question the other characters in the game they clam up after about three questions and will only respond "YOU ARE TOO CURIOUS" in a phoney French accent. Also when I followed the adventurers golden rule EXAMINE EVERYTHING I got thrown out of the manor on the second day. So I am not very impressed with this game but would like to know if anyone has finished it."

PHIL DARKE, 244 Beaumont Gdns, Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey, GU17 0LQ

=====

(Phil's last remarks reminded me of something I have been meaning to ask Probe readers. Has anyone, or does anyone know of anyone, who has managed to complete the adventure MACBETH? That is one adventure that I never managed to complete. The game is played in "real time" and there is no save facility so, you must wait for 1:30 minutes to get back to the point just before you were last killed before you can try another input. Then of course it doesn't work and you get killed once more and have to go through the whole procedure again. This means that if you get to the stage, where I was, where you are ready to place the knives for the murder of Duncan, you will get an average of three inputs per evening session! Frustrating to say the least. Does anyone else know of any adventure that hardly anyone has completed? I would love to hear about it. Looks as if Mindfighter is heading in that direction too. If you have finished it then please let me know. A solution for the helpline would be very welcome too.....Mandy)

IN-TOUCH



SOFTWARE WANTED

FOR AMSTRAD CPC6128

JEWELS OF DARKNESS on disc. Please write with price required to the address below or telephone 0726 850045

MR. RDUGHEAD, Chyton House, Lower Menadue, Luxulyan, Bodmin, Cornwall

=====

FOR AMSTRAD CPC6128

SILICON DREAMS and JEWELS OF DARKNESS on disc. Any reasonable price paid for games complete with documentation.

PAM BRAMALL,

29 Mellowfields Rd, Laughton-en-le-Morthen, Sheffield, S31 7YW

=====

FOR AMSTRAD CPC6128

According to my database the following have been released for the Amstrad CPC. If you are willing to sell any of these or if you have any information about them (such as XX was a Spectrum only game) then please contact me at the above address, or through Mandy. Thanks.

ADVENTURELAND, AL-STRAD, ASHKERDN, BDDK OF THE DEAD, BRAINLESS, BUREAUCRACY, CASTLE DRACULA, CASTLE OF EAGLES, CIRCUS, CORRUPTION, DARK SCEPTRE, DEAD-ENDERS, DIE YOU VICIDUS FISH, DR JEKYLL & MR HYDE, DRUDS MOON, FEDERATION, FISH, FLASH BACK, FRANKENSTEIN, HAMPTON, HRH, ICE STATION ZERO, INFIDEL, INGRID'S BACK, ISLAND OF RIDDLES, JACK THE RIPPER, KNIGHT ORC, LAST BELIEVER, LDST LEGACY OF XIM, MAD JOCKS FAMILY, MAGIC COTTAGE, MAGIC SWORD, MAGICIANS BALL, MALEVOLENCE, MANDAGDRE, MANSION, MAYDAY, MIAMI MICE, MISSION ONE, NOT A PENNY MORE, OLD SCURES, RETURN TO DDDM, RICK HANSON, RDYAL QUEST, SAVAGE ISLAND, SECRET OF ST BRIDES, SHIPWRECK, SHREWSBURY KEY, SNOW QUEEN, TEACHER TROUBLE, TIMES OF LDRE, TREASURE TUNNELS, TRINITY, VIDEOWORLD, VILLAGE OF LDST SOULS, WOLDMAN, ZDRK I.

BOB ADAMS, B1 Uplands, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 7EH

(I may be wrong but I think that Magic Cottage, Shipwreck and Jekyll and Hyde were written for Spectrum only. I also doubt whether Trinity and Bureaucracy are available for Amstrad but would be delighted to be proved wrong.....Mandy)

=====

FOR AMSTRAD CPC464 (TAPE ONLY)

Anyone willing to sell used adventures for the 464 please write to the address below quoting games and prices required. I am especially after the following, although anything considered:

THE BODGIT, BORED OF THE RINGS, CRYSTAL THEFT, CURSED BE THE CITY, ESCAPE FROM KHOSHIMA and HERDES OF KARN.

JIM STRUTHERS, 112 Dismal St, Cowpen Quay, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1JB

=====

FOR AMSTRAD (TAPE OR DISC)

Has anyone got any games for sale suitable for a seven-year-old. Please write with titles and price required to:

LORNA PATERSON, 17 Dchil Street, Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire, FK13 6EJ

FOR COMMODORE 64 (casette) OR AMSTRAD PCW B512

SHADOWS OF MORDOR

Please write with price required to: JØRGEN RIBER CHRISTENSEN,
Geskevej 34, DK-8000 Aalborg, Denmark.

=====

SOFTWARE FOR SALE

FOR ATARI ST

infocom collection - all for sale as new. All titles with original packaging and literature. £8 each including packing and recorded delivery.

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Phone CLIVE SWAIN on 01 864 7156 for availability.

=====

FOR SPECTRUM

The following adventures are for sale at 50p each.

PRICE OF HAGIK, KARYSSIA QUEEN OF DIAMONDS, DOUBLE AGENT, QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN EGGCUP, RIGELS REVENGE, SHARD OF INOVAR, KOBYASHI NARU, HULK, KENTILLA, ZZZZ, VALKYRIE 17.

WENDY COCKBURN, 60 Porters Ave, Dagenham, Essex, RM8 2AG

=====

PLAYTESTERS WANTED

For Spectrum 48K adventures.

MARK WALKER, 11 Albany Rd, Peel, Isle of Man

=====

GRAPHIC ARTISTS WANTED

An experienced ATARI 520 ST graphic artist is required to do some artwork for a new adventure game in development. Detailed criteria will be required. The artist may use STAC, Degas or Macromedia to develop the pictures on.

All work will be paid for on a "per-screen" basis.

Anyone interested in doing the work should send a disc containing at least three samples of their work to:

ERIC STEWART, 18 Vatnaker, Beck, Isle of Lewis

Please enclose S.A.E. if you want your disc returned.

=====

PUZZLE PAGE

Devised by ANN POTTER

While away some time and see if you can come up with the answers to these very clever puzzles.....Handy.

WORD LADDERS

By altering one letter and forming a new word each time, change the top word to the bottom word.

AXE	MAP	LAMP	RDBE	SWDRD	PLANK	TINDER
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ELF	GEM	—	—	—	—	—
		RDPE	RING	—	—	—
				CHASM	STICK	—
						LADDER

In each of the following sentences there is hidden the title of an adventure, e.g. On you there must be a jinx Terry. ANSWER - Jinxter.

1. He's a gold envoy, age unknown.
2. I see that Ulric Khan's on the field.
3. First gliders, now balloons. Whatever next.
4. Said to the first I met, "Hi". Effort was wasted though, no reply.
5. Follow the star, crossing the bridge to the east.
6. Be sure, turn to Ed, ending all doubts.
7. Drop them at Alan's house on the way back.
8. Fight hard. Grasp Ell, break Eric's arm.
9. If it be Jake you want, he be astern.
10. He can balance Lottie and Ellie on his shoulders easily.

ANAGRAMS

The following are all anagrams of adventure titles.

1. TED QUAVERS TUNE
2. SABLE DART
3. A NEW JDB FELL BDYS
4. IN ME, MEET A HITCH
5. TEAM CDMING DN
6. DDUSE LIGHT FIVE
7. NEVER ATHENS
8. ROB DDZY KEN
9. AWARD FOR THED
10. BRAT DIED ON BLAZING HULK



Answers next month!



PAWS for Thought - by Larry Horsfield



This month's article concerns the implementation of an "AGAIN" command. This command is a very useful one, especially if your adventure contains some entries containing an element of CHANCE. For example, in "Magnetic Moon" I have included CHANCE in a couple of the THROW ROPE routines. With an "AGAIN" command, you wouldn't need to keep typing the whole phrase.

First of all, insert the word "AGAIN" in the vocabulary table, as a verb, with "A" as a synonym if you like. To implement this command, what you have to do is get PAW to remember the last input line the player makes. Now, all the word values of whatever the player inputs are held in flags 33 to 36 and 43 to 47 respectively. All we need to do is copy the values held in these flags into empty ones, and copy them back into the original flags when we use the "AGAIN" command. So, the two entries we require in the response table (where 40 is the verb number for AGAIN) are as follows:

EQ 33 40	• •	COPYFF 33 240
COPYFF 240 33		COPYFF 34 241
COPYFF 241 34		COPYFF 35 242
COPYFF 242 35		COPYFF 36 243
COPYFF 243 36		COPYFF 43 244
COPYFF 244 43		COPYFF 44 245
COPYFF 245 44		COPYFF 45 246
COPYFF 246 45		COPYFF 46 247
COPYFF 247 46		COPYFF 47 248
COPYFF 248 47		

To make all this work properly, I found that you will need to insert the following entry right at the end of the response table:

- -
NOTDONE

Note that the symbols used are the "underline" characters.

You can of course use any 9 free flags for this command, but if you are writing a multi-part adventure, then you should use the same flags in each part.

Talking of multi-part adventures, that will be the subject of next month's article, which will also be longer than this one! Until next month, g'day Bruce!

If you have any problems with PAW programming, please write to me, giving full details of your problem and enclosing an SAE, at this address:

PAWS for Thought, 40 Harvey Gardens, Charlton, London, SE7 8AJ



FURTHER INTO THE WORLD OF FANTASY NOVELS

Dave Perry told us in his interesting article (Vol III Issue 6) that he came to fantasy novels via computer adventures. In my case the reverse was true, as I've only been computer adventuring for a year. But I've been reading mystery and detection novels ever since I learnt to read, and I came to science fiction (of which fantasy is a more recent branch) when still at school, more years ago than I care to remember. I was sixteen when I first read Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, and like Dave I have searched for an author whose works are as satisfying.

However, although the Thomas Covenant novels are widely admired, I did not really enjoy the stories, which I found rather grim. This is only a personal opinion, and not one shared by Mandy, who tells me her current favourites are Thomas Covenant and the Belgariad books (by David Eddings). Eddings is high on my list too, and his sequel, The Mallorean, is every bit as good.

My most recent find has been the trilogy called The Winter of The World, by Michael Scott Rohan. Each book tells a self-contained story, but with the underlying theme firmly holding the trilogy together.

In the world invented by Rohan there are two enemies. The first is the Ekwesh nation, where the raiders come from, and the second is the Ice. The land is threatened by the encroaching ice barriers, and it is the theme of the fight against the Ice and its agents which underlies the books.

The first book is titled The Anvil of The Ice. It begins quite violently with a raid on a small coastal town, as a result of which the foundling boy Alv finds his whole world transformed when he is taken to become apprentice to the Mastersmith, Mylio. Alv learns the craft of a Smith, not only in knowing which metals to use for which tasks, and how to work the metals, but also how to imbue his work with virtues and powers which seem magical. Alv unknowingly makes for Mylio a sword which is capable of filling men's minds with fear and horror, so that they are incapable of resisting the Ekwesh soldiers. Realising that Mylio intends to kill him, Alv escapes. After many exciting adventures with his friend Roc, and later the corsairs, Alv decides that it is his responsibility to stop the evil to which he has contributed, so he goes in search of the Mastersmith and the Mind-sword.

A part of the story is Alv's search for his identity, and the whole thing I found most compelling. We meet Kermorvan, the great warrior trying to defend his country; Louhi, an evil influence on Mylio; Iles, one of the Duergar, a race of people who live underground and isolated from mankind; and Raven, one of the ancient powers. Rohan has devised a complete world, with history and legend, and he even includes an Appendix with information about the lands, peoples, languages, flora and fauna, and religion. And of course, there is the indispensable map.

I found the characters believable, and the settings realistic. I felt the cold starkness of the glacier, and the oppressive grandeur of the Duergar halls, not to mention the heat of the dragon's breath, and the wash of the water when the whale dived. In fact I thoroughly enjoyed these books, and I hope you will too.

Pam Bramall

HINTS AND TIPS

PANIC BENEATH THE SEA

By JIM STRUTHERS played on Amstrad

Pull book in office bookcase to find something hidden!
Keep whistle, it's useful.

Tree climbing in the forest clearing can help you.
Be prepared to type your name at the bank!

An armed villain could appear anywhere in the game. Be ready for him or he will kill you!

GREAT PEEPINGHAM TRAIN ROBBERY

By ALF BALDWIN played on Spectrum

Give the guide book to the tourist and ask him for the matches.
Buy some sausages at the butchers.

Buy a tin or sardines at the grocers.

Examine the sacking in the rough shelter to find a clothes peg. In the alley, open tin of sardines and wear the clothes peg on your nose before examining the dustbins.

BOUNTY HUNTER

By MARGO PDRTEDUS played on Spectrum

The lead pot comes in useful. If you wear it on your head you can get up the steps to the plateau, and to go into the Orrgh Depression, put your compass into it.

CUDDLES

By JOAN WILLIAMS played on Spectrum

Ride tricycle to escape Nanny.

Make sure you wear your rompers before venturing out.

Drop spider in Mias Muffet's house.

The moon is made of cheese - dig around.

Ignore what the Snow Queen tells you.

Follow the rainbow, follow the sun, go west.

Wish for a new arm for Teddy!

Attach rocket to Santa's sleigh, light blue touch paper with candle, then examine the stocking for a pressie!

DUNGEON MASTER

By BRIAN PELL played on Amiga.

The following spells and potions are all at full power (MDN) so if you are not at full power then alter the first number to suit (i.e. 1 = LD).

SPELLS:

OPEN DDDR - 66	ZOP - 6635	KILL GHOST, WATER - 652
FIREBALL - 644	GASBALL - 631	LOOK THRDUGH WALLS- 6325
FOOTPRINTS-6152	DARKNESS -6546	FIRE SHIELD - 6454
LIGHT -6345	LIGHTENING-6335	MAGIC SHIELD - 614
INVISIBLE -6326		

POTIONS:

ANTI POISON - 625	STAMINA - 12	HEALING - 62
WISDOM -6153	YA SHIELD - 615	VEN - 661
VITALITY -6154	STRENGTH -6451	DEXTERITY - 6352
MA - 61	NETA -6154	MANA - 6655

THE COUNT
By RON RAINBIRD played on Atari 800XL

Look in the oven after dark.

Take down the portrait.

Get the next postal delivery.

Use sheets for outside descent.

Make sure the coffin cannot be re-bolted from inside.

Take stake on final visit to Dracula during daylight.

In the crypt, light up. This is one time smoking is essential for a longer life!

STRANGE ODYSSEY

Pull and push rod and touch plastic to go places through the curtain.

Twist belt buckle.

Shoot hound but do not kill.

Phaser has two settings.

To get diamond, drop hound in icy location then follow it.

Shoot mound (not hound) to escape.

Take all treasure to ship before leaving.

Break rod to find a crystal.

Red opens doors!

INGR'I'D'S BACK

By RANDY played on Commodore 64.

To get the Hermit's signature on the petition go into his cava, drop the petition, go back outside again and wait for a while. When you go back in you can retrieve the signed petition.

To get Uncle Dusty to sign the petition tell Flopsy to bite the chickens, go into the mill yard, drop the groceries outside the door, ring the bell and jump into the bushes. Dusty will come out when he cannot see you and you can jump out and surprise him with the petition.

SUSPENDED

By JENNY WHEELER played on Commodore 64

At the start CONFIGURE (see instructions in booklet) then:

Put IRIS in Main Supply Room.

Put WALOO in Hallway Junction.

Put SENSA in Sub Supply room.

Put AUDA in Gamma Repair.

Put POET in Weather Control.

Put WHIZ in Secondary Channel.

AFTERSHOCK

By CHRIS MUFF played on Amstrad

To get up the stairs you will need the beam.

GRANGE HILL

By CHRIS MUFF played on Amstrad

To get on the wall, climb up the telephone box!

Contributions are needed for this section please.

KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE CASTLE

DOREEN BAROON, Landal Cottage, High St, Slingaby, York, YO6 7AE

Updated list: HOUSE OF ORION, RAID ON LETHOS, OPERATION STALLION, THE DUNGEON, CURSED BE THE CITY, ROBO CITY, PROJECT VOLCANO, FATHER OF DARKNESS, A.R.C., WEREWOLF SIMULATOR, ANORDMEA 3, AVIOR, MYSTERY OF THE INOUS VALLEY.

DEBBY HOWARD, 10 Overton Rd, Abbey Wood, London, SE2 9SO

AFTERSHOCK, BRAWN FREE, CASE OF THE MIXED-UP SHYMER, O.A.A., EXPERIENCE, FANTASIA DIAMONDO, FOREST AT WORLDS END, GRANGE HILL, HAUNTED HOUSE, HEROES OF KARN, KOBAYASHI NARU, LANCELOT, LOROS OF TIME, MESSAGE FROM ANOROMEA, MINDSHAOOW, RIGELS REVENGE, SEABASE DELTA, SPYTREK, SUBSUNK, TERRORMOLINOS, THREE WEEKS IN PARADISE, TRIAL OF ARNOLO BLACKWOOD, WARLORD.

ROBIN MATTHEW, 44 Fairwater Grove West, Llandaff, Cardiff, CF5 2JQ

ULTIMA I, ULTIMA IV, ULTIMA V, JINXTER, HOLLYWOOD HI-JINX, HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, LURKING HORROR, STARFLEET, WIZARDRY I.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ENCLOSE S.A.E. WHEN WRITING FOR HELP

AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON

No, I'm not really a werewolf. That was just to grab your attention! But I am an American. My name's Jack Johnson and I'm a college grad - and enthusiastic adventurer - taking a year off to travel round Europe. I'm staying with friends in the UK for the next three months taking casual jobs as a waiter/bartender. So, if you're thinking of holding a party, say at Halloween, how about having a genuine American bartender to mix the cocktails? Singapore Slings are my speciality. I suspect your guests would find it a novelty and I'd welcome the chance to meet fellow adventurers. If you're interested then write me, Jack Johnson - you can contact me thru Adventure Probe.

BILBO AND FRODO BAGGINS

Would like to thank everyone for the lovely birthday cards and best wishes on the occasion of their birthday on 22nd September. Special thanks to Gandalf for the lovely box of chocolates.

FISHING FOR RED HERRINGS

THE DEVIL'S HAND
by GORDON INGLIS played on Spectrum

NAIL, ROOT, SPEAR, RUNE STONE, ROCK and FLINT

THE GREAT PEEPINGHAM TRAIN ROBBERY

OBJECTS AND USES - BY ALF BALDWIN

1. GUIDE BOOK Give it to the tourist and ask him for the matches.
2. NEWSPAPER Fan the fire with it.
3. STICKER Remember the telephone number, you will need a taxi later.
4. WHITE COWN Get Blunders to wear it as a disguise to get him out of hospital.
5. BOTTLE Contains pills to keep you awake on the first night in Peepingham.
6. BED PAN Can be used as a frying pan.
7. MEDICINE Ask the doctor for it. Drop it when in the monster's stomach.
8. LETTER Information from Professor Mumble.
9. POSTER Tip on how to beat your rival.
10. LANTERN It is dark in the tunnel.
11. DIRTY HABIT Wear it to be allowed into the Abbey.
12. SAUSAGES Cook them in the bed pan and give them to the old tramp to get him to guide you through the bog.
13. CLOTHES PED The smell in the alley is terrible.
14. TIN OF SARDINES Gets rid of the alley cats.
15. CHEESE Gets rid of the rat in the Abbey drain.
16. LARGE CAN You can use it to carry water, also fuel.
17. CRASH HELMET Protects you from mugger when you are asleep in the inn.
18. DUFFLE COAT Protects you from the cold when you freeze some water in the Cold Store.
19. ICE Drop it when you meet Sam Shovel, he will slip on it and drop his notepad.
20. NOTEPAD Useful telephone number on it.
21. CROWBAR Will lever planks from boarded up garage, but only the Station Master is strong enough.
22. FUEL Fill the tank on the boat with it.
23. NUTS Give them to the mad monk and ask him for the rusty key. If he refuses, ask him to drop it.
24. RUSTY KEY Unlocks cabinet in the Abbot's office.
25. BALLOON Inflate it at the base of the tower and the wind will carry you up.
26. CIDER Gives you enough wind to blow up the balloon.
27. AQUALUNG, DIVING SUIT Needed to enter the lake.
28. SECRET DEVICE Return it to Professor Mumble to complete the game.

GETTING YOU STARTED

MAYDREM

By NEIL SHIPMAN played on BBC

THINK or REMEMBER to flash-back to Ditch. EXAM BAG, EXAM HOLE, E, E, EXAM DRUM, PUSH DRUM, GET DRUM, W, W, W, W, DROP DRUM, CLIMB DRUM, CLIMB CREEPER, EXAM TWIG, GET TWIG, D, D, W, U, EXAM TIN, GET TIN WITH TWIG, D, E, E, E, PUT TIN IN HOLE, DROP TWIG, GET BAG, EXAM LID, GET LID, WEAR BAG, GET TIN, PUT LID IN HOLE, W, W, CLIMB DRUM, CLIMB CREEPER, CUT CREEPER WITH TIN, DROP TIN, SWING. Repeat until over rubbish mountain, JUMP, D, E, EXAM CREEPER, GET CREEPER, TIE CREEPER TO DRUM, GET DRUM, E, E, EXAM HOLE, GET LID, PUT LID ON DRUM, REMOVE BAG, DROP BAG, E, E, E, E, JUMP into river.....

SPACE QUEST III

By PHIL DARKE played on Atari ST

EXIT POD, S, S, E, STAND IN FRONT OF BUCKET CONVEYOR UNTIL YOU ARE CARRIED UP AND DUMPED ONTO A CONVEYOR BELT, STAND, JUMP, W, W, W, GET IN GRABBER, W (grabber makes a U-turn), E, STOP GRABBER ABOUT TWO THIRDS TO THE RIGHT OF THE SCREEN, PRESS BUTTON, E, E, E, E, STOP GRABBER AT BOTTOM RIGHT CORNER, PRESS BUTTON, W, W, W, W, STOP GRABBER BY SQUARE BLUE PAD IN CONTROL ROOM, SAVE GAME, EXIT GRABBER, S, DOWN CHUTE, CLIMB LADDER, GET LADDER, N, E, E, (into tanker), GET WIRE, (left hand side of screen), E, LOOK, WALK TO FRONT LEFT OF HEAD NEAR VENTS, ENTER HEAD, WALK ROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIDDLE SHIP, USE LADDER, CLIMB LADDER, OPEN HATCH, EXAMINE COMPUTER, LOOK IN HOLE the power supply is missing, CONNECT WIRE.....

THE BLACK CAULDRON

By JOHN BARNESLEY played on Atari ST

GO TO THE DOOR AND PRESS F6, OPEN DOOR, ENTER THE DOOR AND GO TO THE CUPBOARD, PRESS F6, TAKE KNAPSACK, PRESS F6, TAKE APPLE, PRESS F6, TAKE BREAD, PRESS F6, TAKE WATERBOTTLE, NOW GO TO THE FIRE AND PRESS F6, TAKE GROUILL, LEAVE THE ROOM AND GO EAST, GO TO THE SHED AND F6, OPEN SHEO, F6, GET CORN, GO TO THE GATE AND F6, OPEN GATE, PRESS NOW THE TAB KEY AND GO TO GROUILL, PRESS F4 TO FEED THE PIG HEN WEN WITH THE GROUILL, NOW WALK WEST BACK TO THE HOUSE, GO TO THE DOOR AND F6, OPEN THE DOOR AND ENTER, GO TO THE BOWL AND WAIT, NOW YOU GET A RDPE, LEAVE ROOM WITH THE PIG, OUTSIDE THE HOUSE YOU GO NORTH, THERE COMES A BIG BIRD THAT GETS YOU AND HEN WEN, YOU MUST RETURN TO THIS POINT WHEN YOU ARE FREE.....

COUNTDOWN TO DOOM

By LORNA PATERSON played on Amstrad

GET EXPLOSIVE, N, LIGHT FUSE, DROP EXPLOSIVE, S, WAIT for loud bang, N, PUSH DOOR, NE to landing area, E, E, N to a Rocky Dead End where you disturb some metatemites who head off to the south, GET PHASEK, S, W, SW, U, W, W to an ice wall, FIRE PHASER which melts the ice wall, E, E, D to Landing area, W to jungle, W, E, NW, W, GET ROD, E, S, SE to a Grotto where you disturb a horde of metallic, nibbling decapods. Head immediately NW, N, N, N, N, over crocodaters and onto an allodile which deals with the decapods which have been chasing you.

SERIALIZED SOLUTIONS

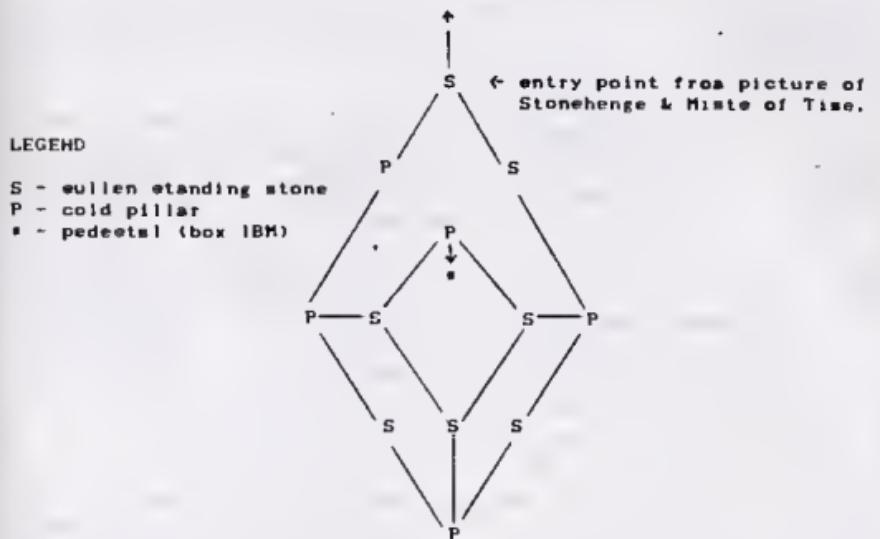
THE PRICE OF MAGIK (Part III of Time and Magik trilogy by Level 8)

By THE WAYFARER played on Commodore 64

....Continued

STANDING STONES MAP

Back to the rock-walled room.



E, E back to the first entrance hall, HW to the clock, NE, N past the werewolf to the panelled corridor, NW N to the bone chamber, SE, E to the alcove, U, W to the tapestry. CAST BOM AT TAPESTRY, (2 points), CAST FIX AT ME (1 point and a better feeling). CAST XAM (1 point), N, HE to the wargame. CAST BOM AT WARGAME finding the Kill and Zap spells (4 points), CAST ZAP (1 point), SW, U, W, WAIT, E, W and when you trip over the wheel, CAST HYP AT BAT (1 point), BAT, GET WHEEL, The bat returns and drops the wheel on your foot. GET WHEEL (1 point).

E, E, SW, S, HW, W, D, S, S, CAST DED (2 points deducted instead of added due to a bug!!), S, SE to the rock walled room, S to scullery kitchen, S to shivved corridor, HW to depreeing junction, S to cold store, WAIT and you find that it is cold enough to freeze the balle off a brass monkey, and this is what happens.

SEARCH SHOW finding 2 balls, GET CRYSTAL (1 point), GET BLACK, CAST MAD (1 point). Your score at this point should be 11% sane, however it is actually 13%. N, SE, N to a scullery where a skeleton bars the way, CAST IBM AT SKELETON (1 point), N, NW, N, NE, N to the Red Moon, TOUCH MOON and feel like a 20 year old again. (HB touching the moon a third

time reverses the spells and you die of old age).

S, SW, S, S, D, D, S to the pentagonal room, SE, SW to the red room, N into a dark room where hangs a picture of dark spawn. CAST BOM AT PICTURE and the dark spawn erupts from the picture breaking a claw in its haste to get out. GET CLAW (2 points), S, CAST SAN (1 point), S whereupon an axe falls on you cracking your plate armour. GET AXE, (1 point), CAST KIL (1 point), and then to the start of the final waves.

N, NW to the grass room and thence S, S, W, O, NW, W to the ferry. GIVE KNIFE TO FERRYMAN, who grudgingly accepts it, GET IN BOAT, WAIT whilst the ferryman rows to the other side winging all the while. He is not so much Charon as "Goeson-and-on", N, N, N, NW to the stone corridor, N, NE to the hall of statues, SE, NE, N to the grassy piazza, N, W to the middle of a great stairway, N to a gothic portico and W to a palatial portico.

Giant ants are guarding the door, CAST IBM AT ANTS and they cower in a corner whilst you OPEN DOOR, IN with the door closing behind you to a statue lined room. NW to an arched stone corridor, N to part of the same corridor where your footstep echo, N again to part like a cloister, SE to a stone room with a door at the east end. It is locked from the inside so you must persuade someone to open it for you.

First it would be good to know that someone is behind the door, so CAST ESP, E and your astral self takes a look (1 point). You find a stone idol and as you are not capable of opening the door for yourself, CAST BOM AT IDOL which comes to life.

By now you have come back to your body again so CAST ESP, E and CAST HYP AT the now mobile IDOL. You are now back in your body again so CAST ESP, E and IDOL, OPEN DOOR. When you return to your body you will find that you can go E through the door which closes behind you. For solving this complex problem you have scored 2 points.

You are now about to start the end-game, NE to a cylinder chamber, and if you have tried to use magic on yourself whilst holding the black ball you will know what you must do, DROP BLACK, S to a great stone room with an exit S to an ice room whose surface you cannot walk on. In the stone room CAST FLY AT ME, the black ball is in a different location and is safe, when you are floating go N, GET BLACK, S, S to the ice room, S to the moon room.

A Moonbeast attacks you, remember the picture of one you activated, and WAVE MIRROR AT MOONBEAST which is scared off by its own reflection. A gargoyle is also here and the only way to pass it is to SAY FEAR which causes it to say "Paaas, master" and allow you to go NW.

You are now in Mygler's tomb, where the magician casts a bolt of lightning at you. The black ball absorbs the spell and crumbles, giving you 2 points. In the confusion CAST DEO which absorbs all nearby magic, killing Mygler and giving you the final 1 point.

Due to the bug the score will only ever show 2% score (a score of 98).

ADVENTURE COMPLETED!



HELPLINE

TELEPHONE HELPLINES

ALF BALOWIN	0452 500512	MON TO SAT 10AM TO 5PM Spectrum.
JACK HIGHAM	0825 819631	FRI TO MON 7PM TO 10PM Spectrum.
WALTER PODLEY	051 8331342	ANY REASONABLE TIME Various.
DOREEN BARDON	065 382 509	MON TO FRI 6PM TO 10PM Spectrum.
		WEEKENDS ANY REASONABLE TIME
MIKE BRAILSEORO	0582 757788	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM Various.
MERC	0424 434214	ANY REASONABLE TIME Ateri ST.
JASOM DEAME	0482 622750	ANY REASONABLE TIME Amiga.
JOAH PANCOTT	0305 784155	SUN TO SAT MOON TO 10PM Amstrad.
ISLA DONALDSON	041 8540602	SUN TO SAT MOON TO 12PM Amstrad.
NIC RUMSEY	03212 2737	SUN TO SAT 6PM TO 9PM Various.
REG LILLEY	0382 215521	TUE TO SUM 6PM TO 11PM Commodore
BARBARA		
BASSINGTHWAIGHTE	0935 26174	SUN TO SAT 10AM TO 10PM BBC.
BARBARA GIBB	051 7226731	ANY EVENING FROM 7PM BBC.
DAVE BARKER	01 732 1513	MON TO FRI 7PM TO 10PM Various.
STUART WHYTE	061 9804645	ANY REASONABLE TIME Amstrad.
ROBIN MATTMFU	0222 569115	ANY REASONABLE TIME IBM PC

THE GUIDING LIGHT ADVENTURE HELPLINE

0898 338833

Please note that if you ring an 0898 number as above that the costs will be 38p per minute or 25p per minute after 6pm and at weekends!

* * * THE ULTIMATE INFOCOM HELPLINE * * *

If you need help with an Infocom adventure then who better to help you than A GRUE! Ring GRUE on 0695 573141 between 7:30pm to 8pm Mon to Fri. Or write to 64 COUNTY ROAD, DRMSKIRK, WEST LAMCS, L39 1QH. Please note that GRUE will give help on INFOCOM ONLY!

MANDY'S HOTLINE

If you need to contact Probe please telephone 0492 77305. I will be available at all reasonable times but please try to telephone between 10am and 10pm.

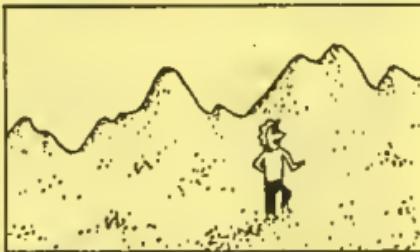
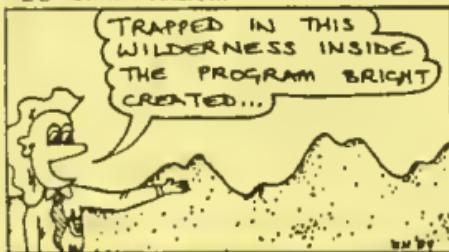
PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ONLY RING

AT THE TIMES SHOWN



JACK THE HACKER 7

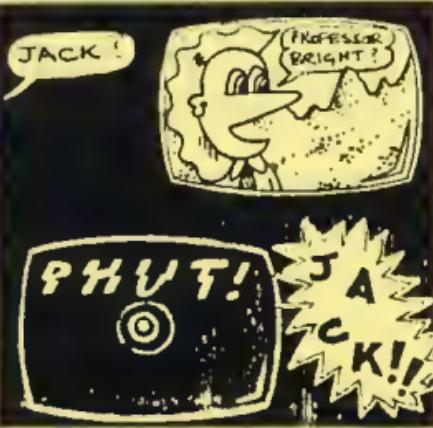
"I'D RATHER HACK..."



SO JACK'S ENTERED
THE WILDERNESS...
THAT GOES ON FOR
INFINITY!

THE ONLY WAY TO
REMOVE HIM NOW IS
TO RESET THE SYSTEM
OR...

THAT CAN ONLY BE
DONE BY SWITCHING
OFF THE COMPUTER...
PULLING THE PLUG!!!



TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE FINAL PART NEXT MONTH - DON'T MISS IT